

## East African Farmers Federation Welcomes ACTESA

The East African Farmers' Federation (EAFF) has hailed the COMESA Authority for endorsing the Alliance for Commodity Trade in Eastern and Southern Africa (ACTESA) as a Specialized Agency of COMESA under the Treaty. EAFF has described the creation of ACTESA as the most significant development in regional agriculture in 2009.

EAFF President Philip Kiri, speaking during the EAFF 2nd Congress in the Tanzanian town of Arusha, noted that farmers in the region have long required a focused initiative that would comprehensively address their market development needs. "We need markets as producers but sometimes when our crops fail we need support - we see ACTESA as designed to meet these challenges. We welcome ACTESA and we will work with it all the way," Mr. Kiri stated.

The 2nd EAFF Congress was officially opened by Tanzanian Deputy Minister for East African Cooperation Honourable Mohamed Aboud, and the Congress brought together over 200 representatives of farmers' organizations in the East African region to map strategies for the agricultural sector in East Africa over the next 2 years.

Newly appointed ACTESA Chief Executive Officer Cris Muyunda, during his address to the congress highlighted that ACTESA priorities over the next year included capacity building of farmer organizations, promoting of sustainable public-private partnerships in input supply and crop marketing and supporting modern instruments in structured



*ACTESA CEO Cris Muyunda welcoming Tanzanian Deputy Minister for East African Cooperation, Hon. Mohamed Aboud, while EAFF President Philip Kiri looks on*

agricultural trade. Other dignitaries at the Congress included ASARECA Executive Director Seyfu Ketema, and senior officials of the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI).

In its resolutions, the congress urged COMESA, EAC and Member States to put in place a strong early

warning mechanism for potential food shortfalls in the region, carefully examine the tax regime affecting agriculture in the region, fully consult farmers before concluding international trade agreements and deal with all security issues affecting farmers in the region, particularly those in the DRC.



*The Enhancing Procurement Reform Capacity Project (EPRCP) is sending COMESA Secretariat Procurement Officer Mr Josephat Kinyele (second from left) on a short training in public procurement to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The training is part of the human capacity building which is important to the Secretariat. Above, ASG Administration and Finance Amb. Nagla El Hussainy bade farewell to Mr Kinyele in Lusaka on 30th July 2009. EPRCP is funded by the African Development Bank (AfDB).*

# REFORM - CBT PROJECT INDUCTS ITS PARTNERS

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The Regional Food Security and Risk Management – Cross Border Trade (REFORM-CBT) project held its first highlight meeting with its partners since April, 2009, in Siavonga, Zambia, from 27th to 28th July 2009. The workshop attracted participation of national focal point (FP) persons and members of the technical advisory committee (TAC) from Kenya, Malawi, Uganda, Rwanda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and DRC. Institutions represented included Ministries of Commerce and Industry; Agriculture; Chambers of Commerce, Cross Border Traders Associations, Revenue Authorities and experts in Sanitary and Phyto-sanitary matters.

The workshop was officially opened by Mr. Geoffrey Osoro on behalf of the Secretary General of COMESA. In his remarks, the SG underscored the crucial role cross border traders play in moving agricultural commodities in the region in enhancing food security and consolidating the regional integration agenda. He mentioned that the coming in of REFORM-CBT with support from the

EU is an opportunity for the small traders to enhance their capacities and be able to participate freely in the just launched Customs Union. On the first day, members were oriented to the background of the project and its objectives, the regional integration agenda in COMESA, cross border trade and the traders associations. The second day was mainly a working session on the draft work plan for the project including a discussion on the terms of reference for the FPs and TAC members.

The second day ended on a very high note as all the members adopted the recommendations of the workshop thereby achieving its expected outputs. Below are some of the major recommendations that were adopted:-

- The CBT-REFORM project should spearhead capacity building initiatives with CBTA's, National Working Groups and government staff involved in facilitating cross border trade on all trade related issues

including STR, NTBs and other business development support initiatives;

- CBT-REFORM project should study the Zimbabwe CBTA to draw lessons, which would contribute to the development of a model for member states and share the outcome with all member states;
- Monitoring and evaluation of the project should be included in the work plan;
- CBT-REFORM in consultation with Member States should develop a criteria for disbursement of funds to member states and this should be shared with the member states.;
- The CBT-REFORM project should support activities leading to the strengthening of national CBTA's and assist in the establishment of CBTA's in countries where they do not at present exist, towards establishment of a regional apex body in the long term;
- The CBT-REFORM should collaborate with EAC, SADC and other cooperating partners with regard to implementation of STR.

The meeting also adopted the Terms of Reference for Focal Point persons and Technical Advisory Committee members and project Work Plan with appropriate amendments.



# Zambia Civil Society organizations hold their first National Climate Change Workshop

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Civil Society organizations in Zambia held their first Consultative workshop on Climate Change on 30th July 2009. The main objective of the workshop was to raise awareness among the civil society organizations on the definition, science, politics and impact of Climate Change.

The meeting was officially opened by the Deputy Director, Department of Environment and Natural Resources Mr Ignatius Makumba in the Zambian

Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Natural Environment. The representative of the Government noted that Climate Change has the potential to reverse the economic gains attained by the country. "Zambia is determined to treat Climate Change with the Seriousness it deserves,"

"The Government of Zambia, has identified Climate Change as a key priority issue under its Fifth

National Development Plan and we have developed a programme on adaptation to Climate Change focusing on up- scaling Conservation Agriculture," Mr Makumba added. The Civil society Organisations have agreed to work with the government in ensuring the interest of the local communities are taken on board in the next climate change regime. The meeting was supported by the COMESA Climate Change project funded by the Government of Norway.



COMESA Secretariat encourages children and young people from schools to conduct educational tours at the Secretariat to learn more about regional integration. Above, grade nine pupils from St Joseph Girls School from south of Lusaka visited the Secretariat and interacted with staff from the Division of Trade, Public Relations and Climate Change Programme.

# THE COMPETITIVENESS AND TRADE EXPANSION PROGRAM (COMPETE)

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The COMESA Secretariat will hold a work planning meeting with the Competitiveness and Trade Expansion Program (COMPETE) from 18th to 19th August in Lusaka. COMPETE is a US Government supported initiative within the AID for Trade development support mechanism under the World Trade Organization (WTO) whose primary objective is to provide targeted strategic support to recipient countries to improve overall trade and economic competitiveness by reducing the cost of doing business.

It is a successor Program to two previous USAID funded initiatives – The ECA Trade Hub (East and Central Africa Global Competitiveness Hub) and RATES (Regional Agricultural Trade Expansion Support). COMPETE is funded by the USAID East Africa (USAID/EA) Office based in Kenya and implemented in close collaboration with COMESA (The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa) and EAC (The East African Community) providing targeted development support to countries within COMESA and EAC.

Within the framework of the US Government support to Africa, COMPETE is funded through two Presidential Initiatives, the Initiative to End Hunger in Africa (IEHA), the African Global Competitiveness Initiative (AGCI) and the Global Food Security Response (GFSR). The Program is for a period of five years from February 2009 to March 2013 with a funding level of US\$78.8 million with includes a Partnership Fund of US\$24.6 million aimed at strengthening national and regional private sector trade associations through capacity building support to enable them play a meaningful role not just in policy advocacy, but in shaping regional integration and development policies generally.

## Components

*The Program has three components and one cross-cutting component:*

### Component 1: Removing Barriers to Trade

Interventions under this Component are aimed at tackling barriers to regional and international trade so as to reduce the cost of doing business by addressing transit and trade facilitation constraints through innovative solutions including promoting private sector participation in infrastructure financing.

Component 1 has three sub-components, Transit Facilitation along international transport and trade corridors; Trade Facilitation; and Finance, in particular, strategies to promote public-private partnerships in finding solutions to transit and trade facilitation issues throughout the Transit Logistics Chain.

### Component 2: Increased Competitiveness and Trade in Selected Value Chains

This a follow-on to the work done under RATES of increasing market access and competitiveness in selected value chains such as, coffee; cotton and textiles; cereals/ staple food crops; and dairy among others in regional and international markets. As feasible, COMPETE will intervene in additional value chains such as livestock and animal products; horticulture; processed foods; and others as may be determined from time to time in consultation with the key implementing partners – COMESA and EAC and private sector business leaders and partners.

### Component 3: Increased Trade and Investment between the US and East and Central Africa (ECA)

This will be a carry-forward and consolidation of work done under the ECA Trade Hub of promoting market access for African exports to the US market under AGOA. Interventions under this component will also seek to mobilize US investment and to forge

partnerships between US firms and investors and their counterparts in the region. Increased trade and investment with the US will also help to diversify Africa's exports and gain a foothold in the huge US market.

Cross Cutting Component: Strengthening the Capacity of Private Sector Trade and Industry Associations

Under the Partnership Fund, COMPETE will provide targeted technical assistance and capacity building support to key selected private sector trade and industry associations at both the regional and national level to strengthen their capacity to deliver services and also their ability to advocate for policy changes. Under the RATES program, major successes were achieved in strengthening regional industry associations along specific value chains and putting them on the path to sustainability. These Associations include, EAFCA (Eastern African Fine Coffees Association); ACTIF (African Cotton and Textiles Industries Federation); EAGC (Eastern Africa Grain Council); and ESADA (Eastern and Southern African Dairy Association).

These Associations will continue to receive support under COMPETE in addition to others such as transporters associations, freight forwarders associations, business associations and other specialized bodies who will be targeted for assistance and partnership under COMPETE.

## Implementation

COMPETE will be implemented in close collaboration and partnership with COMESA and the EAC as well as within the framework of the Tripartite Arrangement involving COMESA, EAC and SADC as well as with key private sector partners. This is intended to ensure that COMPETE activities are driven by and remain within the region through local ownership to ensure relevance and long-term sustainability.